



28 April-2 May  
NICOSIA, CYPRUS



# OPEN Exchange, Mobility and Cooperation between EU Universities and Enterprises with the rest of the World

*Let's all meet in Cyprus*

by Dr Gregoris A. Makrides\*

In the end of 2013, the European Union's Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) 2007-2013, comes to an end after seven years duration. One of its most successful actions, since 1988, is the Erasmus programme, and more specifically the Erasmus mobility for higher education students. More than 3 million students participated in the programme since its start. The new programme that will replace the LLP is the "Erasmus +" programme.

Erasmus + will be the European Union's new programme for education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020. It will offer many funded opportunities for higher education students, researchers, staff and all type of institutions from all over the world. The different actions of the LLP and programmes such as Tempus and Erasmus Mundus are coming under the umbrella of the new Erasmus + programme.

The period 2014-2020 has a clear Education and Training strategy, which aims to increase the percentage of people attaining higher education, decrease the percentage of school leavers and increase the indicators of employability. The Erasmus + is more integrated and has three Key Activity (KA) actions: the KA1 for Learning Mobility, the KA2 for Cooperation projects and the KA3 for Policy Support. For the first time, the Erasmus learning mobility opens up to student exchanges between EU and non-EU countries. Emphasis is also given to cooperation between universities and enterprises as well as specific support to neighbourhood countries and beyond. The borders of the European Union are opening to third countries.

The new programme and its funding opportunities will bring together EU and non-EU nations through cooperation projects, mobility and policy support actions. It will be a great opportunity to fight xenophobia, mistrust and misunderstanding and build strong bonds between the nations.

Through my 17 years of experience in EU funded projects, I worked with many participants from different EU nations. What I realized is that we more or less think in the same way, have common interests and worries, and share common values and ambitions, despite the fact that we have different cultures, languages and religions. Now that the borders of Europe are opening we are all given the opportunity to expand our cooperation with partners in USA, Asia, Africa and Australia based on mutual trust and respect for the differences in culture, religion and language.

The 10th Erasmus Congress and Exhibition ([www.eracon.info](http://www.eracon.info)), known as the **ERACON Congress**, offers a great opportunity to participants from EU and the rest of the world to meet and discuss cooperation under the Erasmus+ programme. The **ERACON Congress 2014** will be organized in Nicosia, Cyprus between the 28<sup>th</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014. The Republic of Cyprus, which is an island in the Mediterranean Sea, is located in the South-Eastern most

corner of the European Union, between 3 continents, Europe, Asia and Africa, which makes it the ideal location for the organization of the congress.

Mobility Coordinators, Placement and Internships Managers, Career Officers, Researchers and Professionals with an interest in the Erasmus and new Erasmus + Programme and belong either to the academic or business world, are invited to participate in the Congress and to make presentations and submit written papers on their experiences in areas related to the Erasmus Programme and all programme supporting and promoting mobility. Represented Universities and Enterprises have the opportunity to participate also in the ***GO-Exchange Education Fair*** running within the Congress programme and giving the opportunity for new agreements and cooperation between EU and non-EU universities and enterprises. Participants will be informed about the new Erasmus + programme and its different actions and opportunities for project funding.

***The event is under the patronage of Mrs Androulla Vassiliou, Member of the European Commission.*** European Commission Executives will be at the ***ERACON Congress 2014*** to present many different funding programmes for all to explore.

The European Association of Erasmus Coordinators (EAEC), the organizer of ERACON 2014, announces its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and invites Europeans and non-Europeans to take advantage of this event in order to meet, learn from each other and cooperate. More information about the programme and how you can submit your presentation can be found at [www.eracon.info](http://www.eracon.info). Networking sessions will involve key players who wish to cooperate and develop partnerships. Several sessions will run parallel on topics related to the Erasmus+ Programme and the cooperation between EU and non EU Universities.

During the Erasmus Congress and Exhibition, two important awards will be given, the “Erasmus Minister” Label Award and the “Erasmus Academic Minister” Label Award.

For the “Erasmus Minister” label a top list of colleagues, who have been Erasmus Institutional Coordinators for more than 15 years or serving as Erasmus Institutional Coordinators since the beginning of the Erasmus Programme in their country with minimum 10 years of service, will be named "Erasmus Ministers" and will be honoured during the Congress, if attending.

For the “Erasmus Academic Minister” label, a top list of colleagues, who have been Erasmus Academic Coordinators for more than 5 years (non-continuous), will be named "Erasmus Academic Ministers" and will be honoured during the Congress, if attending.

#### **ERASMUS POSTER DESIGN COMPETITION 2014**

The 2014 Erasmus Poster Design Competition will be organized during the Erasmus Congress and Exhibition - ERACON 2014. The idea is to reward the excellent poster designs that HEIs produce for Erasmus Promotional purposes. To be eligible to participate in the Competition, a representative has to participate at the ERACON 2014.

#### **EUROPEAN CAREER GUIDANCE CONFERENCE 2014**

The CAREER-EU is organized under the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Erasmus Congress and Exhibition – ERACON 2014. Career Guidance Counsellors and other experts are invited to make presentations and submit papers. Workshops and Sessions within the conference are also invited to discuss specific topics and to draw up concrete suggestions, which can contribute to the improvement of Career Guidance Counselling. More information can be read at [www.career-eu.info](http://www.career-eu.info) and [www.eacg.eu](http://www.eacg.eu).

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